

REMARKS

Remarks About the Drawings:

The Examiner has not approved the prior drawing amendment because Figure 5 purportedly does not conform to Figure 7. Applicants respectfully disagree.

In particular, the “location” lines 76 and 78 in Figure 7 merely show the position of the “locations,” but do not represent a width thereof. This representation is used throughout the drawings and would be clearly understood by one of skill in the art. With respect to Figure 7, the right hand location 76 has a centerline positioned outboard of the retention portion as was shown in the amended Figure 5. Accordingly, drawing Figures 5 and 7 are consistent.

Applicants further note that retention portion 74 does not form part of the side margin, regardless of whether a portion thereof overlaps a portion of the location 76. For all of these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the drawing amendments previously submitted be approved and entered.

Remarks About the June 23, 2005 Office Action:

In the June 23, 2005 Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 1 as being anticipated by U.K. Patent Application GB 2 253 131 A to Kao, and claims 14 and 24 as being made obvious over Kao in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,745,922 to Rajala et al. and U.S. Patent No. 5,591,151 to Hasse et al. The Examiner further stated “the claims do not require the side margins extend from end to end of the composite” (Office Action at 3), and that the “claim language [doesn’t] [require] the side margins extend from end to end or the at least a longitudinally extending portion be located at any specific longitudinal position relative to the composite” (Office Action at 5). In response, Applicants have now defined the longitudinal position of the side margin relative to the composite.

In particular, Claim 1 recites “said side margin extending longitudinally from said first terminal edge,” and Claims 14 and 24 each recite that “an entirety of each of said side margins overlapping said first and second body panels and positioned respectively between said free edge thereof and a corresponding one of said at least one first and second locations are unattached to said bodyside surfaces of said respective first and second body panels.”

In contrast, with respect to claim 1, Kao discloses that the portion of the side margin extending from the terminal edge of the absorbent composite is made up in part of the absorbent

material, which can adversely affect the flexibility of the side margin. With respect to claims 14 and 24, the portions of the side margins of Kao overlapping the body panels would include the end portions, which again are made up in part of the absorbent material. Accordingly, at least a portion of the side margins of Kao are formed in part of the retention portion.

For at least these reasons, Kao does not disclose or suggest all of the limitations of claims 1, 14 and 24, or any claim depending therefrom, and the Examiner's rejections should be withdrawn.

Applicants note the Examiner's reference to page 9, lines 4-6 of Kao, which refers to the absorbent member 17 being made in a rectangular configuration. Even if the member is made in a rectangular configuration, however, there is no disclosure or suggestion, express or inherent, that the shape would necessarily be formed with the side edges of the absorbent member positioned inboard of the adhesive "A." Indeed, the absorbent member 17, when constructed in a rectangular shape, may overlap the adhesive locations "A" and form a portion of the *entirety* of the side margin. Accordingly, Kao fails to disclose or suggest the recitations of claims 1, 14 and 24, and the Examiner's rejections should be withdrawn.

Finally, Applicants do not understand the Examiner's reference to Figs. 1 and 5 of Buell '003 at page 6 of the Office Action, since Buell has not been cited against any of the claims. Indeed, the particular shape of the retention portion, whether hourglass or rectangular, is not a limitation of the noted claims.

CONCLUSION:

If for any reason this application is not considered to be in condition for allowance and an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney at (312) 321-4713.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: November 22, 2005

By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Stover', written over a horizontal line.

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